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THE RED CROSS FLAG.

JOHN T. NAPIER.

"When the smoke of the cannon cleared away, we saw the Red Cross flying over the hospital."

The shot sped out from our serried ships,
Like the sob of a strong man crying,
The sun was veiled as with sudden eclipse,
When the shot sped out from our serried ships,
And England's flag was flying.

Up from the shore the answer came,
The cry of the wounded and dying;
A burst of thunder, a flash of flame—
Up from the shore the answer came,
Where the Prophet's flag was flying.

So we dealt destruction the livelong day,
In war's wild pastime vying;
Through the smoke and thunder and dashing spray,
We dealt destruction the livelong day,
And the hostile flags were flying.

But far through the rolling battle smoke—
Ah God! 'mid the groans and the crying—
A sudden gleam on our vision broke;
Afar through the rolling battle-smoke
The Red Cross flag was flying.

O'er the house of mercy with plain, white walls,
Where they carried the wounded and dying,
Unharmed by our cannon, unfearing our balls;
O'er that house of mercy with plain, white walls,
The Red Cross flag was flying.

As the sign of the Son of man in the heaven
For a world of warring and sighing
We hailed it; and cheered for the promise given
By the sign of the Son of man in the heaven—
The Red Cross banner flying.

For we knew that wherever the battle was waged,
With its wounded and dead and dying—
Where the wrath of pagan or Christian raged—
Like the mercy of God, where the battle was waged
The Red Cross flag was flying.

Let the angry legions meet in the fight,
With the noise of captains crying;
Yet the arm of Christ, outstretched in its might,
Where the angry legions meet in the fight,
Keeps the Red Cross banner flying.

And it surely will come that war will cease,
With its madness and pain and crying,
Lo! the blood-red Cross is the prophet of peace—
Of the blessed time when war will cease—
And the Red Cross flag is flying.

HALF A MILLION PENSIONERS.

There are now dependent upon the United States treasury nearly half a million pensioners who last year received no less a sum than \$82,038,386, which was thirty-one per cent., or nearly one-third of the Government's actual expenditures for all purposes. The total amount paid since 1864, as pensions to soldiers of the late war, up to June 30, last, is \$963,086,444, and all

this while new applications are being filed in Washington every day. There have, first and last, been granted pensions to 737,200 ex-soldiers. There were added to the roll during the fiscal year just ended 60,252 new names, and 2028 that had previously been dropped. Applications are not now allowed to accumulate in Washington as they did up to three years ago, but are promptly investigated and disposed of as their merits may require. Commissioner Black has made a most excellent and sympathetic head of the Pension Bureau, as ex-soldiers, without distinction of party, invariably testify. The practice has grown up of late for rejected applicants to get relief bills passed through Congress with marvellous facility. There have been nearly as many such bills approved, during the past three years, as there were during the previous twenty years. Congressmen have seemed to put through any pension claim, however good, bad or doubtful, that might be submitted to them. This entailed upon President Cleveland an amount of vigilant labor that he ought to have been spared. It was known that he would detect and veto bad bills, and hence such bills were sent to him by the hundred, with a view to create the false impression that he was inimical to the soldier element. A fair sample of these bills is the very latest one to hand. It bestowed a pension on a man who never did a single day's service in the field, never left the State of Maine, in which he enlisted, and deserted while there. Is it not a shame that, to serve a worthless party purpose, there are to be found representative men willing to impose upon the Chief Magistrate of the nation the arduous and unpleasant duty of detecting and preventing such frauds?—*San Francisco News Letter*.

THE COST OF WAR.

A well known English statistician recently presented at a meeting of the London Society, the results of some compilations he had made, bearing upon the expense of maintaining the present military system of Europe, taking in the expense of supporting the armies and navies, building fortifications, new ships and obtaining war supplies of all kinds, beside paying the interest upon war debts incurred during the last quarter of a century, he finds that the annual outgo is equivalent to \$1,750,000,000. If to this is added, the loss of productive labor by the men who are kept under arms, instead of serving in various industrial capacities, the annual expense, or loss, would represent the sum of \$2,150,000,000. Estimates of similar expenses of a generation ago show that in 1860 the gross expenditure in Europe for war purposes was, approximately, \$550,000,000 a year, thus indicating that in thirty years' time these outlays have increased more than threefold. No doubt in the interval the wealth of the various civilized nations has grown at an exceedingly rapid rate, though probably not so fast, proportionately, as their war expenditures. But the question may well be asked, whether it is worth while increasing, by industrial improvements, the wealth of mankind, if the larger part of these gains is to be devoted to the work of preparing men to kill each other?—*Boston Herald*.

—English army authorities are considering a project for enlisting young boys and letting them grow up into soldiers.